

SELF- IDENTITY

A THEMATIC UNIT AND INTRODUCTORY PLAN

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EDIS 540
May 1, 1998

REFLECTIVE
NARRATIVE
&
GENERAL
OBJECTIVES

Narrative Reflection on the Unit

Wow! This unit has been a lot of work! But, I can honestly say that I have really enjoyed putting it together. It is so much fun to create something that you truly believe in. And I believe in this unit. It is definitely not perfect; I will certainly be making some changes this summer, but I actually think that it could *work* in the classroom. I actually think that I could coach my students into thinking about themselves and all of the facets that constitute the self. And then, as the year progresses, when you can hook instruction (that is based on content that you *have to* teach) to the kids (for which I believe my unit plants the beginning seeds), then you've snagged them! My students will have begun the year thinking about THEMSELVES! Together, we will have numerous points of reference to which we can return later in the year. We will have a working common vocabulary about self-identity. I think that if you can hook whatever you happen to be teaching to the kids' identities, then you have made it relevant to their lives. And isn't that what we want to do?

And that is what I believe is the biggest strength of my unit--that it is inherently based and grounded in the lives of my [future] students. It also provides many different "ways of learning." My unit is something that every child can be a part of and it is something in which every child can succeed. It provides a way that students can investigate themselves and all of the influences on themselves. They can ask questions, share feelings, write emotions, creatively create visual and bodily representations, socialize, and be themselves. I believe that allowing students to be who they are is fundamental to a safe and effective classroom community. But how can students be themselves if they really have never stood back to examine what that really means? Well, my unit gives students the opportunity to do just that.

The unit also creates the space and opportunity for the students to get to know and value each other. I believe that students need to socialize and share to learn and to enjoy their time in school, and I believe that my unit provides a lot of time for this. Additionally, students can learn more about themselves by interacting with others. It all fits together.

Fundamentally, the unit on self-identity allows all of the students to start on the same level. This is not a unit about competition and tough grading--it is a unit about growth. It is a unit about taking what the students already know (about themselves) and trying to stretch and challenge that knowledge in new ways. It is a unit about each one of my students. Essentially, they are creating their own learning experience because the experience is inseparably related to THEM!

The weaknesses, as I see them, in the unit are few in number. I think that as an introductory unit to galvanize the students and to prepare them for our year together, this unit does the job. However, it lacks any specific instruction about grammar as well as very little coaching about the mechanics of writing. The unit introduces the students to several discourse modes that we will be further investigating as the year progresses, but it does not address specifics about those modes. But as an introductory unit, I believe that students simply need to be introduced. There is plenty of time over the course of a year to spend time working on grammar in the context of their writing and in exploring numerous modes of thinking and of writing. So, to say that the lack of grammatical and

specific writing issues in the unit is a weakness, seems to be a stretch (in my opinion). Again, I believe that *thought* and *growth* are both the core and the outcomes of my unit. And if those two goals are, in fact, the outcomes, then this unit will only enhance instruction of grammatical and writing mechanics issues later in the year. Put into the introductory unit, they may have turned the students off.

Another weakness that I see in the unit is more in its format. Some of my specific objectives that govern the thematic unit still seem to be stated as activities. When I think about them, I can *see* them as students' learning outcomes, but I'm not sure that some of them are stated in the best way. This will be something that I will continue to grapple with until I have totally grasped Gronlund's criteria for objectives.

Also, in my unit evaluation plan, I am a little unsure about how I will be taking off points. All of the areas in which students can receive points are simply for completion of the activities. I need to keep working with my evaluation plan to determine ways in which I can more accurately measure the effort that students are putting into their work. But the problem that I am continuously running into is that I *want* to provide an environment in which all students can succeed, and I also have let them know that I am not evaluating for specific things, so what should I do? I want them to feel safe and write about whatever they want. But, will everyone get a 100% if they complete every assignment? Is that OK? (I think that my own competitive schooling experience is trying to work itself in, here.) Obviously, this section of the unit will receive some revision before I teach it. Hopefully my Clinical Instructor will be able to work out some of the kinks with me.

Finally, I am looking forward to continuing to shape this unit as I receive materials from my Clinical Instructor. I have some tentative ideas that I would like to use in the fourth week of school (these are at the back of the thematic unit), but how they are employed will depend on what the class will be doing next. I am really looking forward to creating a smooth transition between self-identity and whatever will come next.

This is SO exciting!!

PREFACE

LITERACY

Literacy--it's a complex and difficult term, both to understand and to achieve. When I first defined it, I saw literacy as the kind of knowledge and skills which one needs to be able to read and write well enough to function in society. Basically, I saw literacy as having only a functional purpose. But I have come to see literacy as something much deeper, and something much more important.

Literacy is all about having the tools and the knowledge to be able to think critically. Being "literate" connotes something far greater than just possessing the skills to read and write. It means that one has the capability of both valuing and evaluating themselves, their experiences, and their culture. Only when one can value themselves can they begin to value others, and the cultures and lives of others. Literacy is something which allows students and adults to look around and view the surrounding world for what it is--for its good things and for its bad. Literacy helps people reinvent that surrounding world, to try to make the bad good, and the good even better. Students need to know that they possess this power. Literacy is so much more than just reading the words on the page. It is about reading between the words, seeing the power of language, and then being able to look around and use that power to question and to affirm. We all have that power, and I want students to be able to see that they can make a difference.

I would like students who go through my class to be transformed. Among the things I want them to achieve:

1. Students will be able to learn from their own contexts/experiences instead of relying on others to draw conclusions for them.
2. Students will learn to value different types of language, words, music, poetry, world views, etc. . . not just that of the dominant culture.
3. Students will acknowledge that it is precisely the differences with which we speak, write, think, and act that makes our country rich and diverse.
4. Students will appreciate the differences between people and their cultures, linguistic backgrounds, ethnicities, etc.
5. Students will leave our room knowing that THEY possess the power to make a difference in the world they will inherit.
6. Students will be confident in themselves and in their own voices and know that they can take risks to create their own personal discourse with the world.
7. Students will see that they are not restricted to their own vernacular, but that they are welcome to question, select, and take what they want from the dominant culture and other cultures. . .and then transform and redefine them for themselves.
8. Students will read in a way in which they are able to take their own meaning and interpretations away with them. . . They will see that there doesn't always have to be a "right" answer.
9. Students will recognize the power of language. . .both spoken and written, and will learn to use language effectively in many contexts.
10. Students will leave my room thirsty. I want them to leave understanding that language study is useful, fun, and very important. They will want to learn more because they understand its relevance in their lives.

Class Profile

The targeted class is a heterogeneous mix of 15 and 16 year olds. These students have various ability and motivational levels. The class is ethnically/racially composed as follows: 65% white, 25% African-American, 5% Hispanic, and 5% Asian. There are 13 girls and 13 boys in the class. All of the students have potential, academically speaking. However, they have not all been pushed and/or challenged in ways that inspire them. The class is among those of the at-grade-level tracks. Some of the students will probably attend college and others will not. Some specific examples of the students follow.

Mary Denneman
White female

Mary's parents just recently separated and are in the process of a divorce. She is the product of a middle-class family. Mary has always done average work in school, but her grades are dropping quickly. She is on the JV field hockey team and hopes to make the varsity team next Fall. Her friends all call her "DenNERDman" because they are all either drop-outs or take the lowest level classes. They mean this in a friendly way, but sometimes it's hard for Mary to take it that way. Mary has always had some interest in school, but the separation of her parents had made it increasingly difficult for her to concentrate.

Matthew Washington
African-American male

Matthew, whose mother is a single parent, comes from a lower-middle class family. He has always done well in school. He tries very hard and completes all of his assignments thoroughly. Matthew's first language is Ebonics, and it is not especially easy for him to complete assignments in Standard English--although he tries very hard. Matthew baby-sits for his twin sisters every day after school and cannot participate in after school activities. He has often hinted at wanting to be a photographer for the yearbook, but cannot stay after school for the meetings.

Lee Cho
Korean female

Lee has been in the United States since 6th grade. Her English is very good, but she is uncomfortable speaking in front of others because she feels incompetent. Her parents are very concerned because although Lee has been making good grades, she often comes home from school depressed and uncomfortable. She does not have many friends in the

class, and seeks out her older brother's company in the cafeteria to avoid contact with others her own age. Her favorite pastime is reading.

Robert Callahan
White male

Robert is easily distracted. Although he has not been diagnosed with ADD or ADHD, all of his teacher's have noted his seemingly short attention span. Robert is an average student; the quality of his assignments is erratic. Some assignments he completes are well-done, others sloppy, and some he forgets altogether. He is a likable boy, and is popular among his classmates. There are rumors going around the school that his girlfriend may be pregnant--and he has told the guidance counselor that he may drop out at the end of the year to support his child.

Primary Subject Matter Focus:

Theme: Identity, Self-Identity

Organizational Principles:

Theme-based

Organizing Questions:

Who am I?
How can I figure out who I am?
What makes me, me?
What things/people have contributed to who I am?
What does culture/race/ethnicity/history have to do with my self-identity?
What have the defining moments in my life been?
How can I change things about myself that I do not like?
What goals can I make for these changes and for the future?
Who do I want to become?
How can I get there?

Rationale:

I decided to work with the theme of self-identity to begin the year because I feel that it is crucial in both the lives of my students and the lifeline of the classroom. In order to connect content to the lives of my students, I need both the students and myself to be knowledgeable about our lives, as we see them. Additionally, adolescence is a time that is confusing, scary, experimental, selfish, and tough--by giving the students the

opportunity to reflect on their identity and the identities of characters that we read. I think they will have another medium through which to express and investigate themselves.

I have chosen to organize the unit in an theme-based planning mode because I think that the best way to reach students is to appeal to a side of them that they all have. And what better than to focus learning on the self? I envision this unit as an introductory exploration of ourselves and our class that will continue throughout the school year. And if I can get the students to learn that *they* are central to everything they learn, then I think that the rest of year will be that much more fun and effective!

General Objectives to govern the unit:

Cognitive:

1. Understand identity as having a central place in literature and in personal thought.
2. Think critically about self-identity.
3. Develop responses to literature.
4. Recognize that differences make the world a rich place.

Affective:

5. Value themselves and their experiences.
6. Value the culture and experiences of others.
7. Share feelings with others.

Performance:

8. Speak confidently in their own voice.
9. Use language to communicate their situations and experiences.
10. Compose in various forms of discourse.

SOL's

- 10.1 The student will participate in and report small-group learning activities.
- 10.3 The students will read and critique literary works from a variety of eras in a variety of cultures

Possible Materials:

Short Stories:

The Somebody by Danny Santiago
The Flowers by Alice Walker
A & P by John Updike

Other possible materials:

We Real Cool poem by Gwendolyn Brooks
excerpt from *The Book of Genesis According to Saint Miguelito* by Miguel Pinero
Somehow, Slightly Mutated Methylphenidate poem by Aaron Kook
The Bill short essay by Tom Robbins
Volkswagen advertising about being a "Driver"
The movie *Heathers*
excerpts from *The Color Purple*
quiz from a teeny-bopper magazine

excerpted vignettes from Sandra Cisneros' *The House on Mango Street*
By the Way of Morning Fire short story by Michael Weaver
The Grey Bird short story by Hannah Green
Mr. Princeton short story by Marvin Schiller
 "Gettin' Jiggy Wit It" song by Will Smith
 "You Can Call Me Al" song by Paul Simon
Phenomenal Woman poem by Maya Angelou
 "Against the Wind" song by Bob Seger and the Silver Bullet Band
 "All I Really Want" song by Alanis Morissette
 Picture of the statue *The Thinker*
 A psychologist coming to talk to the class about self-identity
Pump Up the Volume movie
 A Rage Against the Machine song
 "Sculpture," poem by Anonymous
 "The Frisbee," poem by Shel Silverstein

Possible Activities/Instructional Strategies:

- -bringing in objects important to them and writing about them in different modes of discourse
- -cutting up words/sentences from Cisneros vignettes about names/identity and having students place them in orders that make sense to them
- -an initial list of things that answer the question "Who am I?"
- -learning stations that have different kinds of musical expressions of identity at each and letting students imitate/evaluation/analyze
- -researching names and family histories
- -dramatic sculptures to express our feelings
- -having students collect newspaper clips/magazine pictures/photographs/etc. that exemplify their identity in some way and having them make a scrapbook at the end with their writings and all of these collected items
- -learning teams which work together to understand identity and to talk about *The Somebody* in terms of identity--they may try to write about the main character in different discourse modes.
- -having students create acronyms of things that compose our identity in learning teams (i.e. PEOPLE—Personality Ego Observations Perceptions Love Everything else)
- -dramatic machines to express the identity and feelings of Chato, our main character and then of our own feelings and identities
- -whole class discussions about identity in terms of culture/race/ethnicity
- -working on listening skills in learning teams
- -chances to present learning team discoveries in front of the whole class
- -investigating our own selves through autobiography, memoir, diary, interior monologue, letters, etc.

- -brainstorming (in learning teams) all of the influences in our lives that contribute to our own sense of self
- -watching clips of movies and talking about identity as it is presented in those cases
- -grammatical instruction in context of their own writing about identity--mini-lessons
- -comparing our own sense of identity with the identities that are often presented by Hollywood
- -a post-unit list of the answers to the question "Who am I?"

Possible Evaluation Methods and Tools:

- Portfolio assessment in which students collect their favorite pieces of work for holistic grading
- Individual conferences in which teacher helps student/praises student/tells student what they need to work a little harder on
- A scrapbook in which student collected material is presented
- Having students take an end-of-unit self-assessment about what they have learned about their own identities through various sources and content that they have experienced
- Presentation evaluations
- Having learning teams work together and evaluate their effectiveness as a group
- Allowing students to turn certain pieces of their writing in for comments and then having the teacher observe growth in the revised version
- A listening survey and evaluation for the students to conduct for themselves about their skills and how their listening skills have improved
- Exit and entrance writings

INTRODUCTORY WEEK

General Objectives for Introductory Week:

SWBAT

[cog]

1. Understand the function/operation of our classroom.
2. Identify issues that they believe are relevant and worthy of study.
3. Familiarize themselves with the teacher and other students in the classroom.
4. Develop understandings of different processes of learning.

[aff]

5. Value their classmates.
6. Appreciate a community of trust.
7. Share themselves with others.

[per]

8. Participate in group and individual activities.
9. Present information about themselves and/or their classmates.
10. Articulate their feelings on paper.

Day 1: Setting the Stage

Procedures/Instructional Strategies

1. Entrance (15 minutes)

When the students walk into the classroom, I will have some jazz music playing on the stereo (Booz, presentation for EDIS 541). If the lights have the capacity of being dimmed, then the lights will be dimmed (so that they can see enough to write). The message that I am trying to send to the students is that this class is going to be *different*. (The desks are going to be set up in a circle, so the students will be able to look at one another and feel a sense of community.) I imagine that the kids will be looking at each other and wondering what in the world is going on. As the bell rings, I will kind of waltz to the front of the room and say something like: *Welcome to 10th grade English. My name is Miss Hennessey and I am going to be your guide on this captivating tour of language, literature, writing, listening, speaking, and sharing. I say that I am going to be your "guide," and not your leader or teacher, because it is you that is ultimately in charge of your journey.* (This is a little cheesy, but I am trying to set the tone that I hope will continue through the year--I am also trying to galvanize them.) I will then ask them to take out a sheet of paper and freewrite for the next 10 minutes. I will tell them that they can write about anything that they want--what they are thinking, feeling, or doing; how it feels to be back at school; what they are looking forward to; ANYTHING. I will tell them that I am going to collect this writing at the end of class, but that I just want to learn a little about them; they should not worry about punctuation or grammar.

2. Name game (15 minutes)

After the writing time is over, I will introduce a name game that we are going to play. (The jazz music will be turned off after the writing activity.) I'll say something like: *OK, thank you for your writings. I look forward to reading them and learning about you. Now we are going to set out on our journey together. Part of this journey is going to be for us to get to know ourselves and each other as we explore the world of Language Arts. Let's play with language a little while we become familiar with our classmates. Come up with an adjective to describe yourself that begins with the first letter of your name. Can someone give me an example of an adjective before we begin?* (This is just to make sure that the students are familiar with adjectives and can therefore come up with one.) I will thank the volunteer and will even give a couple of my own examples: "Salubrious Steve, Funny Fred, Superb Shannon." *We are going to go around the circle reciting each other's names with the adjective. I will begin. My name is Miss Helpful Hennessey, would you like to tell us your name* (I say this looking at the student on my right or left)? I will then explain that the game will proceed with everyone repeating all of the names and adjectives that have been said before them, and then adding their own. The third student, for example, may start with *Miss Helpful*

Hennessey, Superb Shannon (the person sitting next to them), and then add their own. By the end of the game, this will be a tough task, but I anticipate some laughing and some working together as a whole class to help each other out. While this activity is going on, I will circulate around the room slowly, making sure to be paying attention to whoever is reciting names with their corresponding adjectives, and place index cards on each desk. These will be different neon-colored index cards (just another way to keep the students guessing). After the last student has added his name and gone over the whole list of names, I will be the last person to recite. This will be good practice for me--I also hope to retain the adjectives and use them throughout the year when referring to the kids. This will not be the way that I always refer to them, but it will be just often enough to let them know that I remember.

3. Index cards

(5 minutes)

I will thank the students for their creative adjectives and the fun that we just had. I will ask them to fill out their index card with the following information. I will put up a transparency on the overhead that lists things that they should put on their index cards. It will list:

- * Your full name
- * What you would like to be called
- * The adjective that you chose to go before your name and why you chose it
- * Your favorite thing about English
- * Your least favorite thing about English
- * Favorite candy/sweet
- * Your hobbies

After the students have filled out the cards, I will have them pass the cards up to the front of the room. I will tell them that I will be referring to these cards for various things throughout the year and that it is another way that I can get to know them (Suzanne Henry, draft for introductory week).

4. Interviews

(12 minutes)

I will then thank them for the cards, and say that the cards are a way that I can get to know them, but that it just as important that they get to know each other. A way for them to do that is by interviewing each other. I will ask them to pair up with the person sitting next to them and to interview them. They will have 5 minutes to get some information about the other person--and I will stress that they should find out as many specific details as possible (Adaptation of "Role-taking interview," Kirby and Liner, p. 30). They may want to use a sheet of paper to take notes, because after the activity, they will introduce their partner to the rest of the class. After five minutes of interviewing, we will use the remaining 10 minutes for presenting each other. If the number is uneven, I will pair up with one of the students. If 10 minutes isn't long enough to finish the presentations, we will finish them up first thing tomorrow. After all, getting to know each other is crucial for a safe, fun, classroom community! I will tell the students that

they may want to listen carefully, because they will be asked to remember some of the facts that they learn about their classmates. Before the students begin, I will help focus their question asking: *OK guys. I want you guys to act like reporters! Conduct these interviews to find out neat, interesting things. I don't just want you to find out the facts that your interviewee wrote on their notecards--I want some INTERESTING facts. Can anyone help me think of some good questions to ask each other? 'Common', what would you ask if you were trying to find something out that is unique about the person you are interviewing?* Hopefully a student or two may come up with some responses like, *What is something funny that happened to you in elementary school?* or *What is your family like?* or *What kinds of interesting things do you do in your free time?* If students don't suggest some interesting questions, I will prompt them: *Can you think of any good questions to ask about families? about growing up? about hobbies?* These will hopefully spark some responses.

5. Closure and instructions for supplies (2 minutes)

I will stop the interviewing process with about 2 minutes left to take care of one house-keeping issue. *Before you go, I just wanted to let you guys know that you are going to need a notebook for this class. A three-ring binder would work very well, as would a spiral notebook that has a pocket in it. These are going to be our Learning Logs in which we chart both our individual journeys and our journey as a class through literature and life this year. Please try to have this notebook by the day after tomorrow. If you can't get it before then, it will be OK; you can simply insert your work into the notebook when you buy it. But it might be more convenient for you if you have it before Wednesday (assuming classes started on Monday). Thank you so much for your enthusiasm and effort today! I'm really enjoying getting to know you all!* As the students leave the room, I will stand by the door collecting their freewrites and thanking them. I will also say things like *See you tomorrow!*

Materials Needed

- Transparency
- Overhead projector
- Neon-colored index cards
- Stereo and jazz music

Methods of Evaluation

- No formal evaluation will take place this week; however, I will create pages in my notebook with each students' name on the top. On these pages, I will record interesting or significant comments that each student contributed. (Anecdotal Records, Milner/Milner, p. 387)
- I will put checkmarks in my gradebook which documents that the students did complete the freewrite, though. This will not affect the students' grades, but will let me know if I need to work with or talk to any specific students about completing their work.

Lesson Evaluation (in this space, I return after I have actually taught the lesson to reflect on strengths and weaknesses of the lesson and how I should modify things for the next time.) (Henig, EDIS 589)

Day 2: Getting to Know Us

Strategies/Instructional Objectives

1. Make the connection

(12 minutes)

We will finish up the interview presentations if we didn't finish them yesterday. Otherwise, we'll start the day today with names. (If we are starting with the interviews, then we will only have one student circulate and repeat names and facts about people.) I will ask for a couple of volunteers to go around the circle and name each student and the adjective that everyone put in front of their names. This time I will ask that each person who tries to go around the circle naming the names to think of one thing they learned about each person from their interviewer's introduction of them. This will be pretty tough, too. I think it will largely be a group effort. I'll let the students know that they can help each other remember facts about each other and names and the adjectives. I think this is a good way to let the students know that it is genuinely important to me that they be comfortable with each other and that they know each other. At the activity's end, I will tell the students that I will return their freewrites from the previous day tomorrow. I want to spend a lot of time with each of them, carefully commenting and responding to the students' writing. This will let them know that I haven't just forgotten about their writing, and it will fuel their anticipation of response from me.

2. Appointments

(23 minutes)

I will explain to the students the activity called "Appointments" (EDIS 502, David Vawter). I will pass out a sheet that has blanks and 7 appointment slots. I will instruct that the students need to make appointments with their classmates with the next five minutes. They must make sure that they are paired up with their appointees in a way that if I asked them to get with their appointment #1, that they are paired with only one other person (there should be a 1:1 correspondence for each appointment). They are allowed to get up and move around to make their appointments. (This will be an activity that requires a lot of moving around.) After they have scheduled their appointments (which will be a little chaotic, but there's nothing wrong with that, right?), I will ask that they listen carefully when I give them instructions about their appointments. Each time they meet with their appointment, I will give them some instructions to follow as a pair. The activity will begin:

- Appointment # 5: (I will give the students time to get together with their appointee) I will ask the students to tell their appointees about a time that they were so happy that nothing else seemed to matter.
- Appointment # 2: Students should tell their appointees when something very strange or unique happened to them.
- Appointment #7: Share some information about your families.
- Appointment #4: Talk with your partner about something that you are good at and/or love to do.

- Appointment #1: Share a silly or embarrassing story.

After these five appointments, I will ask the students to go back to their seats. At that point, we will do some larger group sharing. I will ask if anyone wants to share something that happened in one of their appointments, or if they learned something interesting about anybody. (This is my first try at getting the students to share in the large group). I'm hoping that some will volunteer, but if they don't, I will call on some people (using their adjective in front of their name) to share.

3. Sculptures (10 minutes)

After we talk about what we learned in the appointment activity, I will then ask the students if they are ready to try something new. I will explain that part of our journey together will include dramatic improvisation. I will ask if anyone in the room knows what improvisation means. Some students may venture hypotheses. I will either take their cues and build on their definitions, or, if no one volunteers definitions, then I will explain that improvisation is a kind of spontaneous creation that is inspired by the moment. I will tell the students that we are going to create sculptures. . . that this is going to be something that we are going to become very good at together over the course of the year (from "Improvisational Theatre for the Classroom," by Robert Alexander). I will ask the students to get out of their seats and stand in front of their desks. *OK, when I call out something, either an emotional word, or an object, or an idea, it is your job to create a picture with your body and face of that something. You are striking a pose--and anything that you do is the right thing to do. I will give you a minute to think about the first sculpture that we do. OK, the word is HAPPY. Think for one second about what your sculpture is going to look like, and when I count to three, I want you to throw your body like a bullet shot out of a gun or an explosion of dynamite into a position that expresses HAPPY. Ready? One. . . Two. . . THREE! Hold your position!* I will look around here and take notice of how the kids are expressing happy. *Every muscle in your body should be expressing happy. (I'll let a couple of seconds pass). OK, at ease, guys. Now this time, I am going to shout out a word and then shout "GO!" right away. There will be no time for thought--just action. Make sure that every muscle in your body is tuned in to the word you are expressing. Ready for the next one? The word is FRUSTRATION! GO!* We will do a couple of more with the words *school, pride, and self.*

4. Sculpture debriefing and closure (5 minutes)

I will thank the students for their wonderful sculptures and will make reference to some of the particular ones that I noticed. I might say, "Lee hit a wonderful pose for her expression of the word "self," I can't wait to learn more about you, Lee!" or "Marvelous Matthew, I loved your impression of "happy" (both Matthew and Lee are among my profiled students). The students will get back into their seats and I will ask the students to turn to the student sitting beside them and to talk about what it felt like to make the sculptures. Did it make them look on those words in a new way? Did it feel good to be

able to throw their body into positions? After they talk for a minute. I will ask if anyone will share with the large group what they thought. Were some of the words tougher to express than others? Did they enjoy the activity? I will thank them and will tell them that I look forward to seeing them tomorrow.

Materials Needed

- Appointment sheets

Evaluation Methods

- I'll just write significant things in my notebook of Anecdotal Records.

Lesson Evaluation

Days 3 & 4: Setting Up and Fitting In

Procedures/Instructional Strategies

1. Make the connection
(10 minutes)

I will thank the students for the wonderful dramatic improvisations that they created. I will tell them that I had a lot of fun yesterday. I will ask one last brave student to go around the room citing names and something about each student. As one student does that, I will walk around the outside of the circle (so that I am not the focus of their attention) and hand back the freewrites that they composed on the first day. I didn't give them back yesterday because we weren't going to talk about them until today and also I wanted to have enough time to write thoughtful comments on each. I will thank the student (or students, if someone helped) for refreshing our memories about our classmates, and then will direct the students' attention to their freewrites. *This year on our journey together, we are going to keep track of what we are learning and how we are progressing. The notebook that you bought for this class is going to be your Learning Log (Adaptation from Milner/Milner, p. 379-80). There is going to be quite a deal of choice for you guys in this class, after all, you are in charge of your own journey through 10th grade English, as you are in charge of your own journey through life. And the choices that you make will be reflected as you track your learnings in the Learning Log. These freewrites, which I truly enjoyed reading, will be your first entries in the Learning Log. They can go into the pocket or you can punch holes in them (at my desk) if you bought a 3-ring binder. For the sake of keeping track of things, I would greatly appreciate it if you would put the date on everything that you do. Our learnings will not always be uniform as a class, and I would like to see how you, individually, are progressing. (Here, I will hand out a sheet with instructions for their Learning Logs.) I want to stress to you guys that this is YOUR Learning Log. It is for your benefit. It reflects your choices and actions and progress. We will have a shelf in the room for your class's Logs. You can take them home any night to finish something up or add something that you are thinking about. You can include journal entries, sketches that come to mind as you read or think something, freewrites about anything on your mind, how you are progressing through certain books or written assignments, and choices that you make in life and in the classroom. For me, these Learning Logs will be a reference for how you all are doing. I will go to them to check on your progress, and I will respond back to you in them regarding everything that you are doing. The Learning Logs are a great way for us to communicate. Now, you may wonder how these Learning Logs are YOURS when I am going to be reading everything in them. . . Well, to answer this, I will refer back to your control over your own choices. If you have written a journal entry that is private and you would prefer that I didn't read it, you simply have to fold it over in your Log (Adaptation from Milner/Milner p. 277). I expect you to trust me not to read it--the way that I trust you to be the pilot of your own journey. This is a community of trust in this room, and for it to work, we need to trust each other. Could I have volunteer to read the*

instruction sheet? (a student will read) Thank you! Are there any questions or concerns? I will address questions and concerns at this time.

2. Getting Set Up (10 minutes)

Both the rest of Day 3 and Day 4 will be used for the following activity. We will be doing an adaptation of Learning Stations (Milner/Milner, p. 356). I envision this as an opportunity for choice, for students to work with each other continuing to build trust and comfort, as well as a way to focus their thinking on themselves. At the end of the two days, each student will present/share one of his/her products/learnings/findings. We'll start the process with a game. I will challenge the students to get out of their seats and to get into chronological order by their birthdates. This would not normally be tough, but I am going to ask them to do it without talking or making any noise. Students will see that they can convey meaning and language nonverbally while they are having fun (Vawter, EDIS 502). When the students are in a circle according to their birthdates, everyone will say their date. I will then group, according to birthdates in groups of five starting at the January birthdays. These teams of five will work together for today and tomorrow.

3. Learning Stations (30 minutes)

I'll tell the students that there are different learning stations set up around the room. Some are stations where they will get set up for the year ahead of us. Others are stations where they will give their first try to some of the kinds of activities that we will do a lot of over the course of the year. There will be signs above the stations indicating whether or not it is a "Getting Set Up" mandatory station, or a "Learning Station" of choice. I'll ask the students to take their Learning Logs with them and to log in which stations they go to and what choices they make at those stations. The Logs can also serve as a place for first drafts of poems, stories, essays, etc. I will have a timer that will be set to indicate the 20 minute limits at the station (The second station of today will need to be finished first thing tomorrow). After 20 minutes, the students, as a group, must move on to another station. For the duration of this activity, I will have some classical music on the stereo. I will spend about 3 minutes telling the students a little blurb about each station and will tell them that amongst their groups (they can talk for a minute or two as a group), they should try to decide which stations they want to visit and complete. They will all have completed four stations by the time they finish. The stations are as follows:

- ◆ Getting Set Up #1: Mandatory Station. Here there will be a bunch of manila folders in a pile. There will be buckets on the table full of markers, crayons, scissors, construction paper, and glue. The instructions at the table will request that the students decorate their writing portfolio. On the instructions I will define what a portfolio is and tell the students that I want to know some more about who they are. This is their opportunity to show me artistically, as well as to make their own mark on their folder. This will also make it easier for them to identify their own folders (Suzanne Henry, draft of introductory week).

- ◆ Getting Set Up #2: Mandatory Station. This will be a book-finding station. There will be instructions at the station telling students that they will often have the opportunity to read from books of their choice. After they finish activities or on free writing/reading days they will have time to read from a book (Suzanne Henry, draft of introductory week). There will be a sign up sheet and they will need to sign out books that they are borrowing. I will also have a file of book reviews for students to thumb through if none of the books on the shelf excite them (Strzepek, EDIS 541). After they have selected their books, the rest of the time at this station will be spent reading. The instructions will notify students that they should always bring their selected book to class with them. I will also ask them to include their choice in the Learning Log.
- ◆ Learning Station #3: Not mandatory. This will be a station aimed about the student getting to know a little more about him/herself. It is a station about Names. I will have gone to the library and checked out books about names (dictionaries of names, histories of family names) (Figgins, EDIS 542). The Sandra Cisneros clip about names that we used in EDIS 542 will be on the table, too. The instructions will instruct someone in the group to read the vignette out loud and then for each group member to research their names. Hopefully I will have at least 3 books for the five students to share. After each student has found out a little about their own names, they will share as a group what they have learned.
- ◆ Learning Station #4: Not mandatory. Story Telling. There will be some photographs in this station for the students to look at. Each student is to create a story for the people/thing in the picture. There will be copies of little story maps (Stern, p. 67) for the students to use to write down the setting, plot, characters, etc. (This is a way to get them familiarized with those terms and allow them to use their imagination). They can create a group story, or can create their own. The story map will act as an outline of their story, but most of the "work" they will have to do will be in the telling of the story. Each student will tell the story, as they have created it, to their fellow groupmates, about the picture that they chose.
- ◆ Learning Station #5: Not mandatory. Mad-Libs (Moffett, Student Centered Language Arts, K-12, p.280). At this station, I will have a few examples of Mad-Libs. The students will look at the examples and will work together experimenting with language in this way. I see this station as an introduction to language and parts of speech and how language play can be really fun.

During the learning station activities of Days 3 & 4, I will circulate around listening in on group interaction, watching student progress, looking over shoulders at works-in-progress, and being available for help or questions. On Day 4, I will circulate with a camera and take a picture of each student (Henry, draft of introductory unit; Vawter, EDIS 502; Hallahan, EDIS 302). If Matthew is progressing well in the Learning Stations, (one of my profiled students), I may ask him to take the pictures for me. I know about his interest in photography and would love to give him the opportunity to get creative with the camera. These pictures will be attached to the back of their neon-colored index cards. They will help me learn names, help substitute teachers, and help me remember my students in the years to come. I will also take a picture of each group, which will be

posted in the room for the remainder of the year as a reminder of the first week and our getting-to-know-each-other period (Figgins, response to first week).

4. Closure

(0 minutes—to be done as students are getting their things together to leave)

I will quickly thank the students for their cooperation and remind them to have picked out something to share with the class for the next day. I'll also tell them that if they leave their Learning Log on the shelf, I will be reviewing them. . . But if they want to take them home to finish something up or show one of their parents, then I can write comments in them next time.

Materials Needed

- Sheet with instruction for Learning Logs
- Learning Station/Getting Set Up signs
- Sandra Cisneros Vignette about names
- Some example Mad-Libs
- Story maps
- Photographs
- Instructions for each station
- Camera and film
- Folders
- Crayons/markers/glue/scissors/construction paper
- Many books to choose from
- File of book reviews

Evaluation Methods

- I'll check their Learning Logs for how they are progressing and participating. I'll write back to them about their learnings and engage them in a dialogue (hopefully).
- Circulating around the room monitoring group cooperation and participation

Lesson Evaluation

Day 5: Sharing and Reflecting

Procedures/Instructional Strategies

1. Make the connection

(3 minutes)

I will thank the students for their cooperation in the Learning Stations. I will ask them if they enjoyed working together and choosing what they wanted to do. I will say that I enjoyed looking over their Learning Logs. I can tell that they are working hard and are excited by making their own choices and piloting their own journey.

2. Setting the stage for presentations

(7 minutes)

I will walk to the blackboard and will tell the students that we are going to share some of our work. Each student should pick one thing that they did, made, wrote, created, or told at a learning station and should share it with the rest of the class. (This gives them the opportunity to choose something that they are most proud of). *OK, before we start sharing some of what we have learned and done, let's work together to create a picture of what a presentation should look and sound like. Can anyone tell me what a presentation (either the presenter or the people listening to the presentations) should look or sound like (Henig, EDIS 589)?* I anticipate some student responses like "it should sound quiet when the presenter is talking," "it should look like everyone is paying attention to the presenter," "it should sound like the presenter talking in a loud voice so that everyone can hear," etc. If they don't volunteer this stuff (or something close to these answers), I will try to prompt them. After we have finished the list of how to present and how to act when someone is presenting, I will ask a student to read the list for us in its entirety. Then I will tell them that they will each have about one minute to present. They can say anything they want to about their choice, but so that we can hear and see everyone's presentation, we should remember that we only have about a minute. (I feel it is necessary to set the groundwork for presentations in this way so that students know what I expect from them.)

3. Presentations

(30 minutes)

At first, I will ask if any volunteers want to go first. After they have shared their work with the class, I will start moving around the circle of students and addressing them by their names with their adjectives that they created the first day. Each student will share something he/she did and the other students and the teacher will clap after they have done this.

4. Sentence Completion

(9 minutes)

With most of the rest of class, I will ask the students to share a little more about themselves. I want to get them to start thinking about themselves to prepare for the upcoming unit on self-identity. I will hand out the Sentence Completion worksheet

(Kirby and Liner. p. 29-30). They will have 9 minutes to fill out the sheet. I will tell them that these sheets will be only read by me, and that they should be as honest and open as they want to. This is one of the ways that I am trying to gather information about them so that I can be a good guide for their journey through 10th grade English. I will collect these as they leave the classroom. If, by any chance the students do not have enough time to finish the sentences, we will work-in some time in the beginning of next week. I certainly am not willing to sacrifice this activity if the presentations go over the time limit; we will find a time to complete the survey (i.e., possibly combine it with the metaphor writing on Day 2 of the thematic unit).

5. Closure
(1 minute)

I will thank the students and tell them that I am privileged to have gotten to know them this week and that I look forward to seeing them on Monday.

Materials Needed

- Chalk and blackboard space
- Sentence completion surveys

Evaluation Methods

- I will make remarks in my Anecdotal records about significant things.

Lesson Evaluation

THEMATIC UNIT

General Objectives to govern the unit

Cognitive:

1. Understand identity as having a central place in literature and in personal thought.
 - 1.1 Create comparisons between characters' psyche and their own.
 - 1.2 Identify problems of identity in literary characters.
 - 1.3 Dramatize characters' perceptions of self.
 - 1.4 Think critically about aspects of themselves that need improvement.
2. Think critically about self-identity.
 - 2.1 Create dramatic interpretations.
 - 2.2 Create visual depictions of identity.
 - 2.3 Identify influences on identity.
 - 2.4 Understand the word "consciousness."
 - 2.6 Understand the term "cultural identity."
3. Develop responses to literature.
 - 3.1 Respond to a variety of literature.
 - 3.2 Discuss a variety of discourse modes.
 - 3.3 Understand the concept of metaphor.
 - 3.4 Critique the language of the media.
 - 3.5 Write a script.
4. Recognize that differences make the world a rich place.
 - 4.1 Define what it means to "be somebody."
 - 4.2 Discuss the role of culture in identity consciousness.

Affective:

5. Value themselves and their experiences.
 - 5.1 Communicate with themselves about their own identity issues.
 - 5.2 Create metaphors to shed light on their identities.
6. Value the culture and experiences of others.
 - 6.1 Identify differences between the identities of literary characters.
 - 6.2 Discuss cultural identity.
7. Share feelings with others.
 - 7.1 Present products of thought and effort to the class.
 - 7.2 Share ideas/feelings with the large group.

Performance:

8. Speak confidently in their own voice.
 - 8.1 Feel confident and safe about sharing.
 - 8.2 Share with small and large group.
 - 8.3 Articulate feelings and thoughts.
9. Use language to communicate their situations and experiences
 - 9.1 Share in small groups.
 - 9.2 Compose various pieces about themselves and their identities.
 - 9.3 Speak to larger group about identity issues in their lives.
10. Compose in various forms of discourse.
 - 10.1 Work cooperatively to compose a product.

- 10.2 Experiment with different discourses.
- 10.3 Experiment with different genres.

SOL's

- 10.1 The student will participate in and report small-group learning activities.
 - 10.1.1 Work in pairs.
 - 10.1.2 Work in teams of four.
 - 10.1.3 Present learnings to the larger group.
- 10.3 The student will read and critique literary works for a variety of eras in a variety of cultures.
 - 10.3.1 Interpret Danny Santiago's "The Somebody."
 - 10.3.2 Interpret Alice Walker's "The Flowers."
 - 10.3.3 Interpret Sandra Cisneros' vignette "Smart Cookie."